

My name is Kathy Peterson and I have been involved as a volunteer with the City of Prairie Village for over 11 years in various positions and projects as a community volunteer. For 3 1/2 years I worked with a group of kids who wanted to have a skatepark built in PV. We worked alongside the city staff, Mayor and City Council to achieve that. I have since been a member of the PV Parks and Recreation Committee and worked on the Parks Master Plan and also serve on the PV Community Center Feasibility Study committee as well. I have completed the PV Police Academy program and I have worked at several VillageFest events, worked at the PV Arts Shows, and now co-chair of the PV JazzFest event, all as a volunteer. It is funny as I have been very involved in many different capacities with the city, and I have never seen Ms. Nelson or for that matter, heard of her until this campaign for Mayor started heating up.

I have worked with the Mayor, many city council members, city staff, police officials, public works staff, other volunteer committees and their members, and never, I repeat, never have I ever seen or witnessed any kind of abuse by any member of city personnel, officials, or volunteers. If anything, city council and the Mayor and their tireless VOLUNTEER hours that they put in at council meetings, budget meetings, committee meetings and as liaisons for all the city committees, insults and belittles the very accomplishments that PV's Mayor Shaffer and city council members strive for and achieve every year.

I have today done my own inquiries into the "alleged misuse" of taxpayer's money and I found out something truly remarkable that I was amazed that I did not know.

That budget line item that Ms. Nelson has herself all in a wad over has been actually misrepresented by her as her interpretations is a bit askew. I, too have seen the overviews of the travel expenses and taking into account the number of nights in the various hotels, and considering the cities where these conferences are held, I see that the \$800 hotel bills pointed out were actually for more than just one night, and actually 4 nights and in a major metropolis larger than Kansas City, \$195 a night can actually be a bargain, which is a logical explanation and over looked by Ms. Nelson. Also, in looking over the expenses, I also do not see inordinate excesses in regard to airport transportation as I believe that the word "Limo" was actually part of the company name providing that service and that the vehicle in question was a shuttle van to the airport, again being misconstrued as being an actual limousine. There is a big difference between a big van and a luxury limousine.

I also discovered that the level of professional development that Prairie Village encourages and supports all city council members, the Mayor, and city staff to participate in on a regular basis, as this is also included in this line item budget that has also been blown out of proportion by Ms. Nelson as the exorbitant travel and dining expenses that city officials "regularly treat themselves to" is to say the least, an overstatement of the facts. The "Conference & training budget" line includes: conferences, training, Chamber events, Chamber golf tournament, Legislative breakfast, City Hall Day, Shawnee Mission Education Foundation, Council of Mayor dinner, MARC events, MARC training, NE Johnson County Leadership, NE Johnson County Mayor's lunches, Mileage reimbursement and Council retreats, partially. To come in under budget on that line item and still be able to have all the great snow removal, trash and curbside recycling, and our fabulous parks and our trees and our curbs and our sidewalks and streets and

our safe neighborhoods, great pool, grant opportunities for home improvements, accessible shopping, and a true sense of small town community in a big city. WHEW !!!

I bet that the Mayor and city staff who are and have been participants and/or members of various organizations such as MARC and taking full advantage of the educational opportunities offered by MARC to explore and help the city procure a \$1.6 million grant reward to improve and refurbish the 75th St. corridor, a vital and important artery carving its way through the heart of PV. That \$1.6 million grant trumps the pittance of expenses incurred by the cumulative Mayor, city council and staff expenses for travel in the pursuit of further educating themselves in how to continually make Prairie Village one of the most comfortable, safe and livable cities in the Kansas City region. It seems Ms. Nelson missed that in her exploration of truly investigating and digging into all the expenses in that line item on the budget. This grant award also dispels the human error of 2 years ago that is such a topic of discussion as well. It also reminds me of that old adage, beating a dead horse.

City council meetings are always open to the public. Ms. Nelson knew that, as she made her visit at the public participation time offered at every meeting right at 7:30 pm on the 1st and 3rd Mondays of the month. Perhaps if Ms. Nelson had attended the council meeting the night that the CID was approved by council and the Mayor, she would have discovered as I did, because I was interested and was there, that the council chamber was filled with the merchants of PV shops and Corinth shops who were in complete favor of the sales tax increase. Imagine, risking business that they could lose, but hopeful that the improvements being proposed would help their businesses in the long run. How innovative of them to want to help find a way to revitalize our shopping centers and enjoy the promise of being able to attract more customers to the city.

What Ms. Nelson may not realize, too, is that PV does not have the advantages of our surrounding cities with lots of commerce and economic development as we are a land locked community that is mostly residential, so the limitations of our geography make our tax base not as lucrative as adjoining cities who enjoy more of the advantages of commercial endeavors.

As far as the serious escalating crime in Prairie Village, it is always a known fact whether it be PV or Blue Springs or KCMO or Raytown or Overland Park, that when the economy is in the toilet, the crime rate increases. I remember many years ago in the 80's when the economy was also in the toilet and visiting my cousin in NY and when I and my 7 year old son took the train into the city from the suburbs, my cousin insisted that I take off my jewelry before I left and as soon as it started getting dark, to make our way quickly back to the train station to get back to the suburbs safely. Perhaps Ms. Nelson should like to experience not allowing her kids to take their naps in their bedroom on the front of the house because the high school 3 blocks away has occasional drive by shootings after school. Or how about this: try listening to gunshots at midnight on New Year's Eve instead of fireworks. Believe me, when I say that the crime in Prairie Village is far from rampant. Besides, any citizen in PV can help prevent having their flat screens taken from their living rooms walls over the fireplace by closing your curtains. Advertising what you have is always an enticement to wrongdoers.

I doubt seriously that Ms. Nelson, a Prairie Village "resident" has ever set foot anywhere near city hall in any other capacity than to waste staff time with dramatic and unnecessary accusations. I also would like her to take a good hard look at the city that she lives in and look at all of the advantages and conveniences of this city and that those very staff members, officials and council members she is riding her saddles of infamy on are the ones who diligently and relentlessly work to preserve our way of life here in PV.

So, Ms. Nelson I suggest if you really feel this strongly about all the wrong doing in PV that you could have been perusing your own contributions to helping make your city better. Sitting back on the proverbial haunches of selective and assumptive criticism with your supposed "non politically" motivated aspirations 2 weeks shy of the mayoral election in PV as a known supporter of the opponent, Michael Kelly, running against Mayor Ron Shaffer, is a short sided way of trying to stir the pot. Stirring the pot is always good to do and there is always room for improvement in any city, state or national government structure, but airing incomplete and less than accurate information to the media is nothing short of pure and simple ignorant sensationalism which is why everyone still slows down to see if they can see the body inside the smashed car hoping for a glimpse of protruding bone fragments or best of all, real blood !!!!!!!